



ASSESSMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES OF TOUR OPERATORS TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM – A CASE STUDY ON MYSURU AND DAKSHINA KANNADA DISTRICTS

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the important sectors in the economic development of the country. Many of the countries are depends mainly on income which will be generated by the tourism activities. Under the tourism concept, there are different stake holders who play a vital role. Among the stake holders of tourism, tour operators are also one of the key players towards promotion of tourism activities. The tourism sector is gaining increased importance for the economic development of countries around the world. The purpose of this paper is to give a theoretical overview of the classical and contemporary business strategies that can be implemented in a more or less modified form by tourism companies in Mysore and Dakshina Kannada districts. Paper also focuses towards how the tour operators use the marketing strategies towards development of tourism activities in Mysuru and Dakshina Kannada districts. Due to the competition among tour operators, they use different strategies for reaching out their tourism services to the tourists. Now a day, tour operators are using online marketing services to promote their tourism activities to the tourists. While providing the tourism services to the tourists, there may be the competition among recognized and un-recognized tour operators. In this aspects each and individual tour operators will implement their own strategies for the enhancement of their tourism business.

KEY WORDS: Tour operators, Strategies of tour operators, Promotional activities, techniques and objectives.

1. Introduction:

Tourism is one of the important sectors of development of the country. Due to values, beliefs of people there is enhancement of tourism activities in the country. As tourism is the vast area in which there are different stake holders plays vital role. All the stake holders are depends on tourism activities, in order to earn the money. Among the stake holders, tour operators are also contribute towards development of tourism activities in the country. Tour operators provide tourism services to the tourists through tour packages. As there is recognized and un-recognized tour operators are providing tourism services, there is more competition among them. Each tour operators implement their own method of promoting tourism services to the tourists. Tour Package is a newer method of destination marketing in worldwide and is one of the means which enable tourists to enjoy destinations and other tourism resources at lower prices. Tour Packages contributed far and away to the unexpected growth of the global and domestic tourism industries. The marketing mix perspective analysis of tour packages consists of product perspective analysis, price perspective analysis, place/distribution perspective analysis, promotion perspective analysis, people perspective analysis, process perspective analysis and physical evidence perspective analysis.

Defining strategy: The common thread among the organizations, activities and product markets, that defines the essential nature of business that the organization was or planned to be in future. The pattern of objectives, purpose, goals and the major policies and plans for achieving these goals stated in such a way so as to define what business the company is in or is to be and the kind of company it is or is to be. The strategy is advance plan in which the tour operators involve in their business to make the competition in positive manner.

2. Tourism Marketing Strategies:

Integrated in the marketing strategy of the travel agency, the product strategy establishes a series of objectives specific to this area as: the superior valuation of the of the tourist potential, attracting a larger number of local and foreign tourists, preventing season effects, consolidation of the position held on certain intern and extern markets, launching new tourist products, obtaining an increased competitiveness of the tourist product through an optimum balance between quality and price.

3. Review of Literatures:

To assess the various strategies of tour operators, some of the articles are reviewed to identify the issues of the present study.

Michael Porter (2010) determines three major types of generic business strategies: cost leadership, differentiation and focus. The focus strategy on the other hand can be differentiation focus and cost focus.

Goeldner and Ritchie (2012) Tourists may spend their leisure time engaging in various sports, sunbathing, talking, singing, taking rides, touring, reading, or simply enjoying the environment. If we consider the subject further, we may include in our definition of tourism people who are participating in a convention, a business conference, or some other kind of business or professional activity, as well as those who are taking a study tour under an expert guide or doing some kind of scientific research or study

Dwyer, L (2016) tourism depends mainly on strategic issues of new implementation, success of tourism enterprises will continue to hinge on their efforts to add value to products and services through the use of technology producing competitive advantage. Only the one who can react to changes of prices, capacity and product availability to the needs of demand in a real time can win the battle on the increasingly competitive tourism market.

4. Research Gap:

By reviewing the literatures, there is less work has done in the field of tour operator's strategies in assessing the marketing activities. Each and every tour operators adopt their own strategies in promoting the tourism activities in the market.

5. Statement of the Problem:

Assessment of marketing strategies of tour operators is different from one operator to other. While providing the tourism services, tour operators has to prepare tour packages and also they need to satisfy the requirements of every tourist. While providing the tourism services they fail to adopt the right strategies in promoting their activities.

6. Need for the Study:

There may be recognized and un-recognized tour operators providing tourism services to tourists. Each tour operators adopt their own strategies for satisfying the needs of tourist's requirements on tour activities. The method of selecting the strategies is quit eminent in the activities of tour operators.

7. Objectives of the Study:

1. To identify the various strategies of tour operators in promoting the tourism business
2. To assess the perception of various stake holders regarding the activities of tour operators in Mysuru and Dakshina Kannada districts.

8. Hypotheses of the Study:

H₀: "The role of tour operators is Un-favorably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district"

H₁: "The role of tour operators is favorably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district"

9. Scope of the Study:

Present study focused towards the assessment of marketing strategies of tour operators in Mysuru and Dakshina Kannada districts. The purpose of selecting these two districts in the study is as they are the places which receive more number of tourists in all the seasons. Mysuru is famous for its heritage and historical places and Dakshina Kannada district is famous for pilgrimages centre.

10. Research Methodology:

To assess the perception of tour operators, tourists in both the districts, public, government employees and hotels are enquired to collect their opinions regarding tourists. Questionnaires are prepared to ask their views of tour operators' activities in marketing strategies.

11. Testing of Hypothesis: Hypothesis - 1

The Perception of Various Stake holders towards the Role of Tour Operators

of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district”

H₁: “The role of tour operators is favorably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district”

H₀: “The role of tour operators is Un-favorably perceived by other stake holders

Table No.1: Frequency and Percent Responses for Statement

Sl no	Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Tour operators create an opportunity for tourists to visit local projects and attractions in local areas which leads towards the development of tourism sector	F	47	82	46	28	27
		%	20.4	35.7	20	12.2	11.7
2	Tour operators show equal concern towards domestic tourists and international tourists so it became one of the reasons for expansion of the tourism sector	F	43	81	44	30	32
		%	18.7	35.2	19.1	13	14
3	Because of the initiatives of the Tour operator good accommodations have come up in local areas so it resulted towards progress of tourism sector	F	43	68	40	38	41
		%	18.7	29.6	17.4	16.5	17.8
4	Tour operator concentrate on development of local tourism services	F	35	65	44	39	47
		%	15.2	28.3	19.1	17	20.4
5	Tour operator buy local products/ services while providing the services to tourists so it effects positively towards improvement of tourism sector	F	38	70	46	32	44
		%	16.5	30.5	20	13.9	19.1
6	Tour operator create a friendly relationship with local people, local hotels, and local transportation service providers which resulted towards enlargement of tourism sector	F	38	72	44	33	43
		%	16.5	31.4	19.1	14.3	18.7
7	Tour operator employ local people at the time of providing tourism services which leads to growth of tourism sector	F	39	71	43	31	46
		%	17	30.8	18.7	13.5	20
8	Tour operator's services are favourably affecting on the local tourism business so it enable to development of tourism sector	F	39	71	44	33	43
		%	17	30.9	19.1	14.3	18.7
9	Tour operator book local hotels for tourists which became one of the reason for expansion of tourism sector	F	5	13	4	4	4
		%	16.7	43.4	13.3	13.3	13.3
10	Income of hotel business increases because of positive approach about the hotel from tour operator	F	4	12	6	5	3
		%	13.3	40	20	16.7	10
11	Tour operator recommend local hotel to tourists which resulted towards expansion of business and tourism sector	F	6	11	5	4	4
		%	20	36.7	16.7	13.3	13.3
12	Tour operator maintain close relationship with local hotels which resulted towards development of tourism sector	F	4	10	6	5	5
		%	13.3	33.3	20	16.7	16.7
13	Because of the contribution of tour operator local hotel business has increased which leads to expansion of tourism sector	F	4	11	5	5	5
		%	13.3	36.6	16.7	16.7	16.7
14	Tour operator join hands with the government in creating awareness among prospective tourists so it became one of the reason to improvement of tourism sector	F	33	67	50	36	44
		%	14.4	29.1	21.7	15.7	19.1
15	Tour operator will give some suggestions to the government for development and improvement of infrastructure in selected destinations which leads to enlargement of tourism sector	F	32	70	49	36	43
		%	13.9	30.4	21.3	15.7	18.7
16	Tour operator approaches the government to develop the local tourism destinations	F	34	72	48	32	44
		%	14.8	31.3	20.9	13.9	19.1
17	The tour package prices quoted by tour operator are affordable	F	64	120	80	56	80
		%	16	30	20	14	20
18	Tour operator covered all the tourism places which are planned before taking up the trip	F	63	121	84	56	76
		%	15.8	30.2	21	14	19

Note: F-Frequency; %-Percent; SA-Strongly agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly disagree.

Table No.2 One-Sample Statistics

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
01	230	3.41	1.267	0.084
02	230	3.32	1.301	0.086
03	230	3.15	1.381	0.091
04	230	3.01	1.373	0.091
05	230	3.11	1.366	0.09
06	230	3.13	1.363	0.09
07	230	3.11	1.385	0.091
08	230	3.13	1.367	0.09
09	30	3.37	1.299	0.237
10	30	3.3	1.208	0.221
11	30	3.37	1.326	0.242
12	30	3.1	1.322	0.241
13	30	3.13	1.332	0.243
14	260	3.07	1.345	0.083
15	260	3.07	1.333	0.083
16	260	3.1	1.345	0.083
17	400	3.08	1.371	0.069
18	400	3.1	1.352	0.068

Source: 16.0 version SPSS

Table No. 3: Type of Respondents

Type of Respondents	N	Mean obtained	Std. Deviation	Mean expected	t	P
Public	200	34.8100	5.00491	33	5.141	.000

Source: 16.0 version SPSS

As public is one of the stake holders of tourism, the average total mean score obtained (Mean 34.8100) on the issue of "The role of tour operators is favourably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district" were verified against the average expected mean value of 33, one sample t test revealed a significant difference between average expected and observed mean values. t value of 5.141 was found to be significant at .000 levels. Further, it is clear that the observed mean values were significantly higher than the average expected mean values. Public as one of the stake holders has perceived the role of tour operators favorably.

Table No. 4: Results on Hotels' respondents

Type of Respondents	N	Mean obtained	Std. Deviation	Mean expected	T	P
Hotels	30	40.2667	2.77841	39	2.497	.000

Source: 16.0 version SPSS

By considering hotels as one of the stake holders of tourism, the average total mean score obtained (Mean 40.2667) on the issue of "The role of tour operators is favourably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district" were verified against the average expected mean value of 39, one sample t test revealed a significant difference between average expected and observed mean values. t value of 2.497 was found to be significant at .000 levels. Further, it is clear that the observed mean values were significantly higher than the average expected mean values. Hotel as one of the stake holders has perceived the role of tour operators favorably.

Table No. 5: Results on Government Department Employee's respondents

Type of Respondents	N	Mean obtained	Std. Deviation	Mean expected	T	P
Government Department Employee	30	8.7667	1.67504	9	-0.76286	.000

Source: 16.0 version SPSS

By considering government department employees as one the stake holder of tourism activities, the average total mean score obtained (Mean 8.7667) from Government department employees on the issue of "The role of tour operators is favourably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district" were verified against the average expected mean value of 9, one sample t test revealed a non-significant difference between average expected and observed mean values. t value of -0.76286 was found to be significant at .000 levels. Further, it is clear that the observed mean values were significantly lesser than the average expected mean values. A government department employee as one of the stake holders has perceived the role of tour operators un-favorably.

H_0 formulated as "The role of tour operators is Un-favourably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district" is rejected since test statistics revealed a significant value.

H_1 formulated as "The role of tour operators is favorably perceived by other stake holders of Mysore and Dakshina Kannada district." is accepted since which has specific value where it has higher level of favorably perceiving the role of tour operators in Mysore and Dakshina Kannada districts among the stake holders.

Since, majority of the stake holders have perceived the role of tour operators favorably, the results indicate that the null hypothesis be rejected and accept the alternative hypothesis.

12. Findings:

1. Tour operators provide details of local area activities such as festivals and special events to the tourists and therefore more tourists visit those destinations in regular intervals.
2. Tour operators recommend specific new local destinations that tourists may not know which leads to development of tourism sector.
3. While providing the tourism services to the tourists, tour operator also give some preferences for sustainable tourism development concepts which lead to improvement of tourism sector.

13. Suggestions:

1. As tour operators, they should not concentrate only on making profit in their tourism business but also try to develop the tourism industry. Along with the profit oriented a tour operating business has to focus towards service orientation aspects.
2. Tour operating agency depends on tourism activities. So they need to identify various tourism destinations and those destinations should be conveyed to tourists, which leads to promotion of tourism industry. When the tour operators give information about new tourism destinations, tourists will be attracted from those tour operators. So it is suggested that, always tour operators should try to introduce new tourism destinations which is unknown to tourists.

14. Conclusion:

A Tour operator has a direct relationship with tourism activities. When tourists plan a trip, they consult the tour operator to analyze the exactness of the upcoming tour. Providing detailed information to the tourists is also one of the roles of the tour operators. Many tour operators provide tourism services in order to make some profit but there may be few tour operators who provide services with the view of service and may be development-oriented. Tailor-made packages as well as readymade package trips are also available with the tour operators. They provide the package tour according to the requirement of tourists. Tour operators mainly depend on tourism. They are supposed to adopt some policies and guidelines which are made by the government. Through incorporation of policies and guidelines there may be the chances for the development of tourism activities in the selected destinations.

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